



## CDC's role in helping cruise ship travelers during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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Outbreaks of infectious diseases can happen on cruise ships because people spend time close together and with travelers from many countries. The current scientific evidence suggests that cruise ships pose a greater risk of COVID-19 transmission than other settings because of the high population density onboard on ships, which are typically more densely populated than cities or most other living situations. While this is one contributing factor, CDC's surveillance data show that drastically decreasing population onboard does not end transmission. Other factors likely contributing to onboard transmission are crew living and working in close quarters in a partially enclosed environment where social distancing may prove challenging, even with a limited number of people onboard. Additionally, mild illnesses and asymptomatic infections make case detection and isolation and quarantine practices based on clinical presentation alone challenging. Thus, covert spread of infection among crew may keep the virus circulating from one voyage to the next. Disease can spread between ships when crew members from a ship with an outbreak transfer to other ships. Infected people may also travel on cruise ships between countries. For these reasons, outbreaks of COVID-19 on cruise ships pose a risk for rapid spread of disease beyond the voyage and into communities across the globe.

Because of the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the high risk of COVID-19 spread on cruise ships, the US government issued a No Sail Order for cruise ships in waters subject to US jurisdiction and has advised US travelers to [defer all cruise travel](#). The No Sail Order is published in the [Federal Register](#).

From July 20 through September 21, 2020, CDC invited public comments on specific questions regarding interventions, methods, protocols, and procedures for protecting the public's health as well as the health of prospective passengers, crew members, and industry-related service providers. The information received may be used to inform future public health guidance and preventive measures related to travel on cruise ships. Public comments will be available after review and posting at [Request for Information \(RFI\) Related to Cruise Ship Planning](#).

CDC continues to work to control COVID-19 on cruise ships at sea while also protecting against further introduction and spread of COVID-19 into communities. The COVID-19 pandemic is constantly evolving, and aggressive efforts are needed to contain the spread. CDC will continue to evaluate and update our recommendations as the situation evolves.

## What is the No Sail Order?

In response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and the increased risk of spread of COVID-19 on cruise ships, CDC published the first industry-wide [No Sail Order](#) on March 14 to prevent, among other things, new passengers from boarding cruise ships. CDC extended its No Sail Order, effective April 15, 2020, to continue to suspend all cruise ship operations in waters subject to US jurisdiction. Among other things, cruise lines are required to develop comprehensive plans to prevent, detect, respond to, and contain COVID-19 on their cruise ships to protect the health and safety of both passengers and crew. CDC extended its No Sail Order a second time, effective July 16, 2020 and a third time, effective September 30, 2020. Passenger operations continue to be suspended, cruise ship operators must continue to follow CDC's [Interim Guidance for Mitigation of COVID-19 Among Cruise Ship Crew During the Period of the No Sail Order](#), and cruise ship operators with appropriate No Sail Order response plans must continue to follow the [COVID-19 Color Coding System](#) requiring preventive measures for crew on board based on the ship's status.

## How long is the No Sail Order in effect?

The extended Order is in effect until one of the following occurs:

- The Secretary of Health and Human Services declares that COVID-19 no longer constitutes a public health emergency, or
- The CDC Director rescinds or modifies the order based on specific public health or other considerations, or
- October 31, 2020.

## Why did CDC extend the No Sail Order?

The No Sail Order was extended to protect the public, cruise ship passengers, cruise ship crews, and other industry workers. By restricting cruise ship passenger operations, the Order helps achieve several public health goals:

- Prevents further spread of COVID-19 into and within the United States
- Preserves critical federal, state, and local resources that are needed to respond to COVID-19
- Preserves critical healthcare, emergency, and port resources

## What cruise ships does the No Sail Order cover?

The No Sail Order applies to all cruise ships, which it defines as commercial passenger ships with the capacity to carry more than 250 people and where an overnight stay onboard by passengers or crew is anticipated. The Order applies to all cruise ships operating, or seeking to operate, in waters subject to US jurisdiction, including those that have previously voluntarily suspended operations. This Order additionally applies to cruise ships operating outside of US waters if the cruise ship operator intends for the ship to return to US waters while the Order remains in effect. It does not apply to cargo ships.

## What does the No Sail Order mean for my upcoming trip?

Passengers who plan to travel by cruise ship should contact their cruise line companies directly for further information concerning their itineraries.

On March 17, 2020, CDC issued a [Level 3 travel health notice](#) with a clear recommendation to avoid all cruise travel due to ongoing spread of COVID-19 and the increased risk of person-to-person spread of infectious diseases on cruise ships. On April 15, CDC extended its No Sail Order to suspend all cruise ship operations including voyages with passengers in waters subject to U.S. jurisdiction, and subsequently extended the Order effective July 16 and September 30, 2020.

The extended Order is in effect until one of the following occurs:

- The Secretary of Health and Human Services declares that COVID-19 no longer constitutes a public health emergency, or

- The CDC Director rescinds or modifies the order based on specific public health or other considerations, or
- October 31, 2020.

### What is CDC doing to help cruise ships with crew still on board?

CDC is committed to helping cruise lines provide for the the safety and well-being of their crew members while onboard and as they disembark. CDC is allowing crew members to disembark from all cruise ships in U.S. waters.

Cruise ships with complete and accurate No Sail Order response plans are able to disembark their crew members without a signed attestation, if the crew are disembarking by noncommercial means. Cruise ships with complete and accurate No Sail Order response plans are also able to use commercial travel to disembark crew members if they meet certain criteria to show they have no confirmed COVID-19 cases or COVID-like illness onboard. Crew members on these ships that aren't affected by COVID-19 can also resume some of their daily interactions with fellow crew members.

Cruise ships have medical facilities on board that can provide medical care to sick crew members as needed. As part of the response plans that cruise lines are required to implement under the No Sail Order, cruise lines should make sure they have enough medical staff, equipment, supplies, and other resources to provide care for sick people on board. They also need a plan to transfer sick crew members to a hospital on land if they need medical care that the ship's medical facility can't provide.

CDC and federal partners are monitoring ships with crew only, and we are working with the cruise companies and local and state health departments to ensure that seriously ill crew members can get medical assistance on land if the ship can't provide it. CDC remains committed to humanitarian medical evacuation for people in need of lifesaving support. Emergency medical evacuations do not require CDC approval.

Crew members on ships in or intending to be in U.S. waters who have questions about the process for disembarkation or who have concerns about what their ship is doing to prevent COVID-19 onboard can share their questions or concerns with CDC by sending an email to [eocevent431@cdc.gov](mailto:eocevent431@cdc.gov).

## Cruise Ships International Voyages Affected by COVID-19

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These are cruise ships that had international voyages with U.S. ports, and therefore are under CDC jurisdiction. International voyages without U.S. ports of call are not under CDC jurisdiction and not included.

International cruise voyages with U.S. domestic ports of call have been suspended since March 14, 2020, under CDC's [No Sail Order](#). **Therefore, this chart is available for historical purposes but is no longer being updated.**

Ship name	Voyage Start Date	Voyage End Date
Carnival Freedom	8-Mar	15-Mar
Carnival Imagination	5-Mar	8-Mar
Carnival Valor	29-Feb	5-Mar
Carnival Valor	5-Mar	9-Mar
Carnival Valor	9-Mar	14-Mar
Carnival Vista	15-Feb	22-Feb
Carnival Vista	29-Feb	7-Mar

Celebrity Eclipse*	2-Mar	30-Mar
Celebrity Infinity	5-Mar	9-Mar
Celebrity Reflection	13-Mar	17-Mar
Celebrity Summit	29-Feb	7-Mar
Coral Princess*	5-Mar	4-Apr
Crown Princess	6-Mar	16-Mar
Disney Wonder	28-Feb	2-Mar
Disney Wonder*	6-Mar	20-Mar
Grand Princess	11-Feb	21-Feb
Grand Princess*	21-Feb	7-Mar
Holland America Zaandam*	7-Mar	2-Apr
MSC Armonia*	2-Mar	9-Mar
MSC Meraviglia	1-Mar	8-Mar
Norwegian Bliss*	1-Mar	8-Mar
Norwegian Bliss	8-Mar	15-Mar
Norwegian Breakaway	29-Feb	7-Mar
Norwegian Breakaway*	7-Mar	14-Mar
Norwegian Encore	8-Mar	15-Mar
Oceania Riviera*	26-Feb	11-Mar
RCCL Explorer of Seas	8-Mar	15-Mar
RCCL Liberty of the Seas*	15-Mar	29-Mar
RCCL Majesty of the Seas*	29-Feb	7-Mar
RCCL Rhapsody of the Seas	7-Mar	14-Mar
RCCL Oasis of the Seas*	8-Mar	15-Mar
RCCL Symphony of the Seas*	7-Mar	14-Mar

*\*CDC was notified about COVID-19-positive travelers who had symptoms while on board these ships.*

*For all other ships, CDC was notified about travelers who had symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19 within 14 days after disembarking. Since these travelers' symptoms began after the voyage, the traveler might have contracted COVID-19 during the voyage; however, other sources of transmission after the voyage cannot be ruled out.*

## Related Pages

[Travelers Returning from Cruise Ship and River Cruise Voyages](#)

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[State Department Information for Cruise Ship Passengers](#) 

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[Interim Guidance for Ships on Managing Suspected Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

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[MMWR: \*Public Health Responses to COVID-19 Outbreaks on Cruise Ships\*, March 2020](#)

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Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#), [Division of Viral Diseases](#)